

# False Friends!

Ali Darwish

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What I love most about Australia is its postal service. Apart from its natural beauty and land of abundance and opportunity, I just love Australia Post. It is secure, reliable and above all friendly.

A few years ago, I received a letter from a branch manager at Auspost, as the locals would pet-name it. As I sat in the living room that afternoon with my two little children, we were all so excited to discover what was inside that big official envelope. Could it be an early Christmas present from our in-laws in the UK? We just wondered!

I opened the envelope in such a hurry on a coffee table in the living room, with my two little children watching on, with their little beady eyes glittering with expectation, and suddenly an awful, horrible pungent smell hit the place. Smokes! It was a horrid smell of human faeces! Who could pull this silly, tasteless (wasn't short of smell though) prank on us and why? Inside the envelope I found soiled documents from the Taxation Office addressed to me at my accountant's post office box, with an Australia Post headed letter saying the following:

*Dear sir,*

*A few nights ago, a gang of hooligans broke into the Post Office at [...] and vandalized the place. Please find enclosed documents addressed to you. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.*

*Yours sincerely*

*[signed]*

*Branch manager  
Australia Post*

The last thing I wanted was a reminder from the Tax Office and the least a bunch of documents smeared with human excrement. But we all laughed and laughed all three of us until my wife came home late that afternoon. My children could hardly wait for her to step into the living room before they told her about our early Christmas present!

The other day, I received a parcel in the mail. On it was a yellow sticker that read: "Opened by Australia Post for Inspection by Quarantine". Inside, there was a book sent to me by a friend in Switzerland as a present and two leaflets from Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, explaining why the parcel was opened. To be honest, I felt my privacy had been violated, but then thought what

the heck! These days, the authorities cannot be too careful with Arabic names, can they?

I was a bit curious! Why would Quarantine inspect a "suspect" parcel if terrorism was suspected? Wouldn't it be Customs or ASIO (the intelligence organization)? I looked closely at the Declaration of Contents that was stuck on the front of the envelope and read the word "livre". It suddenly hit me smack in the face! Livre = liver! The silly buggers misread the French word "livre" (book) and thought the parcel contained "liver"! Hence the Quarantine Inspection!

I just love Australia Post. Wouldn't you?

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